



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

ALTERATION TO A HISTORIC PROPERTY STAFF REPORT

Site / District(s) 34 Day Street
Case: HPC 2014.048
Applicant Name: Chris Bailey
Applicant Address: 19 Whittemore St, Arlington, MA 02474

Date of Application: June 23, 2014
Legal Notice: *Demolish gazebo; install new fence,
 garden shed, & hardscape.*

Staff Recommendation: Certificate of Appropriateness &
 Denial for a Certificate of Appropriateness
Date of Public Hearing: Wednesday, July 15, 2014



I. BUILDING DESCRIPTION

Architectural Description:

This building is a single family Mansard cottage constructed c. 1874 with a high level of architectural detail. The dwelling has two bays on the primary façade as well as a partially open porch and polygonal bay window. This modest, yet ornate residence features recessed segmental-arched dormer windows, spring eaves, and polygonal bays on both the front and right side facades.

Historical Context:

The structure first appears on the 1874 Hopkins Atlas, under the ownership of H. Brown and the footprint appears as it does today. Directory research from 1876 states that Henry D. Brown, a subscriber of books located at 20 Cornhill in Boston, has a house on Day Street, near Orchard Street. The 1884 Hopkins Atlas illustrates the same footprint, but no owner is listed. The 1895 Bromley Atlas lists Caroline S. Lacount as the owner of the dwelling and the parcel is 10,280 square feet.

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Proposal of Alteration:

The Applicant proposes to:

1. Demolish the gazebo at the east rear corner of the lot;
2. Install granite steppers from the rear brick landing to the proposed patio area (see site plan);

3. Install a brick patio area (10' x 12') at the east rear corner of the lot, to be composed of brick with a limestone or granite edge (see site plan);
4. Create screening with lattice to obscure the compost area (see image below); and
5. Install a new shed (8' x 12') at the west rear corner of the site (see image below).
6. The Applicant no longer requests to install a fence.



Top: Gazebo and existing carpenter ant damage

Bottom Left: Proposed new shed (18"x27") with aluminum framed windows

Bottom Right: Proposed lattice to screen 20' x 10' compost area

III. FINDINGS FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Prior Certificates Issued:

In 2010, a Certificate of Appropriateness was granted to install a new double-hung window in the Mansard roof on the left (north) side, remove the rear right side porch and door, replace said door with a matching double-hung window, and construct a period appropriate glass and metal conservatory on the rear façade.

In 2011, a Certificate of Non-Applicability was issued to restore windows, install insulation in the exterior walls and basement, and repair in-kind any damage caused by the insulation installation. Another

Certificate of Non-Applicability was issued earlier this year, 2012, to repair and rebuild the rear porch and stairs in-kind.

In 2012, a Certificate of Appropriateness was issued to install a wood and single pane glass panel door with sidelights and a transom and construct a wall, to be consistent in material with existing porch wall detailing) to surround the door in such a manner that this wall and door may be removed in the future without harm to the historic fabric to which the door and wall are attached.

Precedence:

1. A gazebo from the 1930s is not a prevalent accessory building type within the City. The HPC has not had another gazebo come before them for review. Staff understands that carpenter ants have caused substantial damage to some of the features and integrity of the gazebo. The structure is a later addition to the property, but is more than 50 years old.
2. The HPC regularly grants the use of granite on historic properties as steps, edging, etc.
3. The HPC regularly grants the use of brick on historic properties as steps, edging, pathways, etc. A brick patio edged in granite or limestone is similar to other requests.
4. The HPC does not regularly grant the use of lattice for screening; however, the lattice proposed is 4' in height, not detrimental to the historic fabric of the property, and would be located at the rear of the parcel to mitigate views of the compost and trash areas.
5. The HPC has not reviewed requests to construct new accessory structures; however, while this is not a common request, the structure would be minimally visible due to the driveway and fencing.

Considerations:

What is the visibility of the proposal?

The property has layers of landscaping that begin at the sidewalk and continue to the rear of the lot. The proposal will be visible from the street as a majority of the yard is visible from Day Street; however, the granite steppers and brick patio will likely be the least visible as they will be located on the ground and toward the rear of the lot. The proposed location of the new shed will also be minimally visible as this is located in the west corner, behind the driveway and a fence. Removal of the gazebo will be visible, but would greatly open up the yard. The lattice would be located at the rear of the lot as well; while visible, this would not be a focal point due to the corner location and height of the fencing.

What are the Existing Conditions of the building / parcel?

The building and grounds are well maintained. The owners are moving forward with the proposal in an effort to do renovations to the yard in an effort to utilize this space better.

Does the proposal coincide with the General Approach set forth in the Design Guidelines?

- A. *The design approach to each property should begin with the premise that the features of historic and architectural significance must be preserved. In general, this tends to minimize the exterior alterations that will be allowed.*

The architectural features described in the MHC Form B are not proposed to be altered as part of this proposal.

- B. *Changes and additions to the property and its environment that have taken place over the course of time are evidence of the history of the property and the neighborhood. These changes to the prop-*

erty may have developed significance in their own right, and this significance should be recognized and respected

The addition of a gazebo to the property is a later important addition and has developed significance due to the age of the structure.

Does the proposal coincide with the appropriate Specific Guidelines as set forth in the Design Guidelines?

H. Landscape Features and Paving

It is recognized that often the environment surrounding the property has a character, scale and street pattern quite different from that existing when the building was constructed. Thus, changes must frequently be made to accommodate the new condition, and the landscape treatment can be seen as a transition feature between the structure and its newer surroundings.

The hardscape alterations, lattice fencing and addition of a shed are appropriate to the property and fit within the character of the neighborhood.

The original layout and materials of the walks, steps and paved areas should be maintained if significant grade changes constitute an important feature of the structure or site. Consideration will be given to alterations if it can be shown that improved site circulation is necessary and that the alterations will accomplish this without altering the integrity of the structure.

Significant grade changes are not an important feature of the site. The proposal will more clearly define the use for each area of the yard.

J. Demolition - Demolition of part or all of a structure is considered to be an alteration to the exterior and is subject to the review of the Commission.

The HPC does not typically approve demolition of existing accessory structures. This is viewed as a later alteration to the property and is therefore significant.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Staff recommendation is based on a complete application and supporting materials, as submitted by the Applicant, and an analysis of the historic and architectural value and significance of the site, building or structure, the general design, arrangement, texture, material and color of the features involved, and the relation of such features of buildings and structures in the area, in accordance with the required findings that are considered by the Somerville Historic District Ordinance for a Historic District Certificate. This report may be revised or updated with new a recommendation or findings based upon additional information provided to Staff or through more in depth research conducted during the public hearing process.

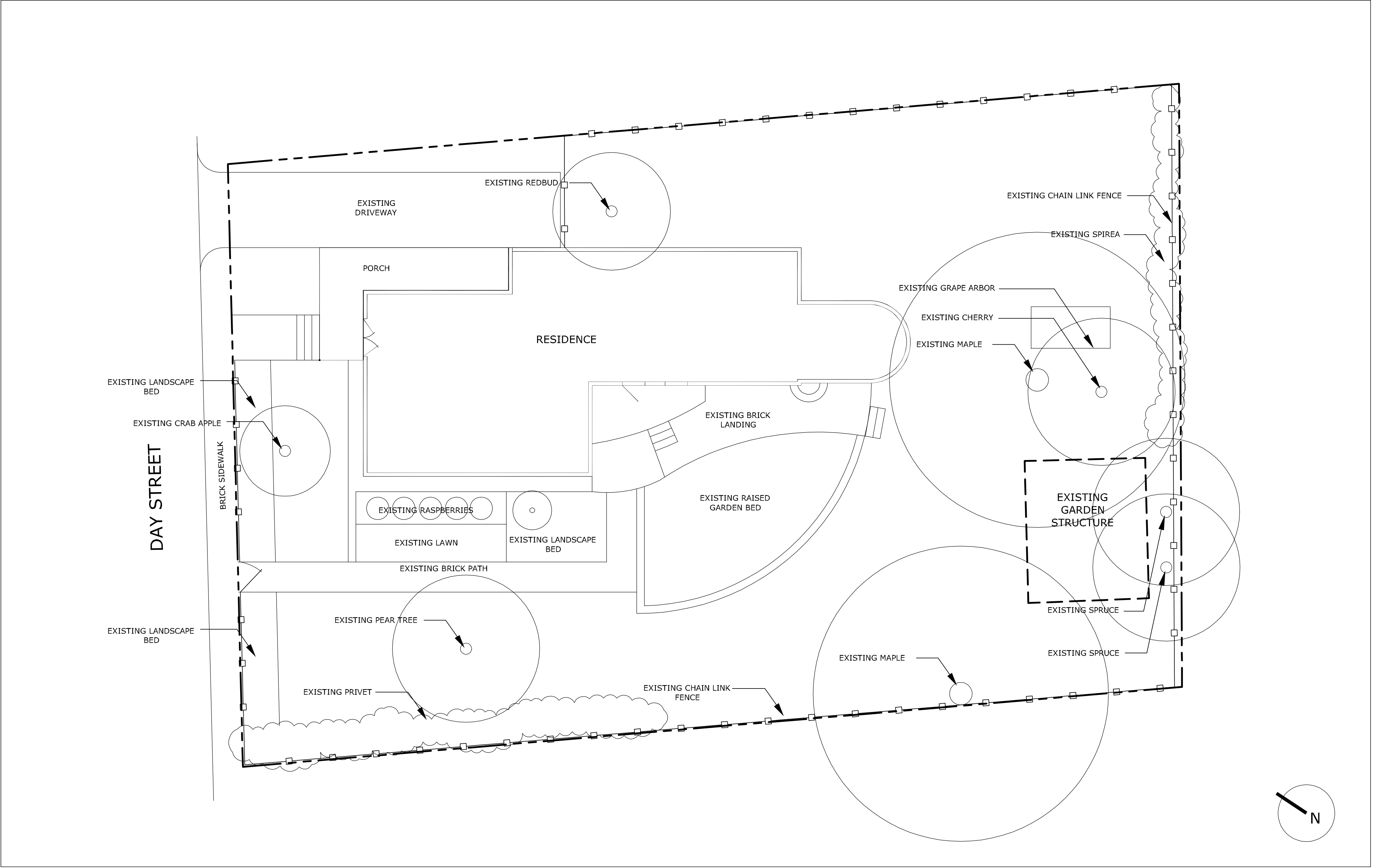
Staff determines that the alteration for which an application for a Historic Certificate has been filed is appropriate for and compatible with the preservation and protection of the 34 Day Street Local Historic District; therefore Staff recommends the Historic Preservation Commission grant 34 Day Street a Certificate of Appropriateness to:

- 1) Install granite steppers from the rear brick landing to the proposed patio area;
- 2) Install a brick patio area (10' x 12') at the east rear corner of the lot, to be composed of brick with a limestone or granite edge;
- 3) Create a lattice screen (20'x10') to obscure the compost and trash areas; and
- 4) Install a new shed (8' x 12') with aluminum windows and screens at the west rear corner of the site.

Staff determines that the alteration for which an application for a Historic Certificate has been filed is not appropriate for, nor compatible with the preservation and protection of the 34 Day Street Local Historic District; therefore Staff recommends the Historic Preservation Commission do not grant 34 Day Street a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish the gazebo at the east rear corner of the lot. Staff does recommend that the Applicant look further into alternative uses or locations for such an accessory structure, which is very unique to the building stock and historic landscape of the City. Staff also recommends looking further into how much of the damage may be repairable.

34 Day Street



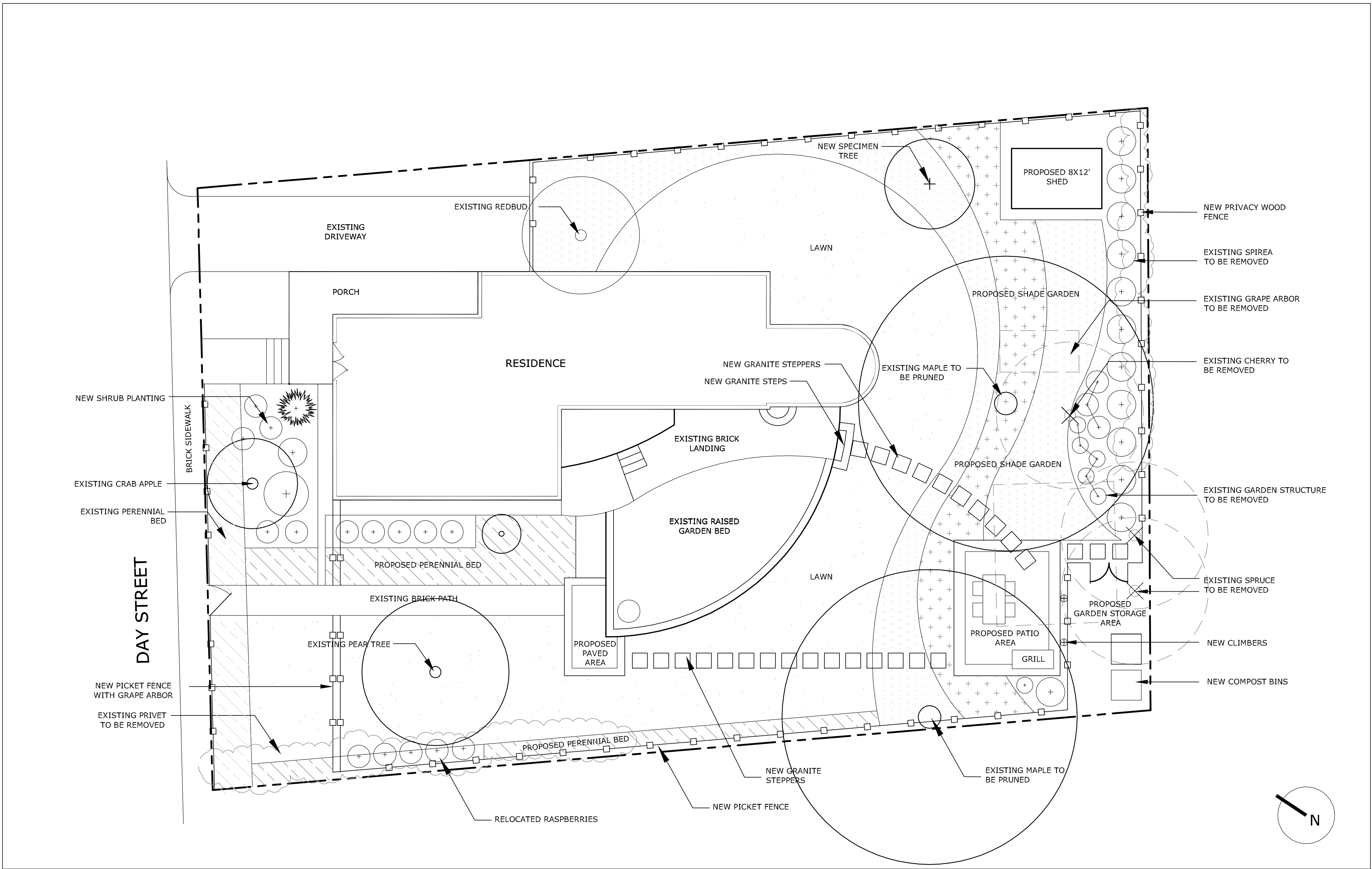


Crosina Residence - 34 Day Street, Somerville, MA

Existing Conditions Plan

Date: 5.28.14
Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"

C|S BAILEY landscape, Inc.
copyright 2014



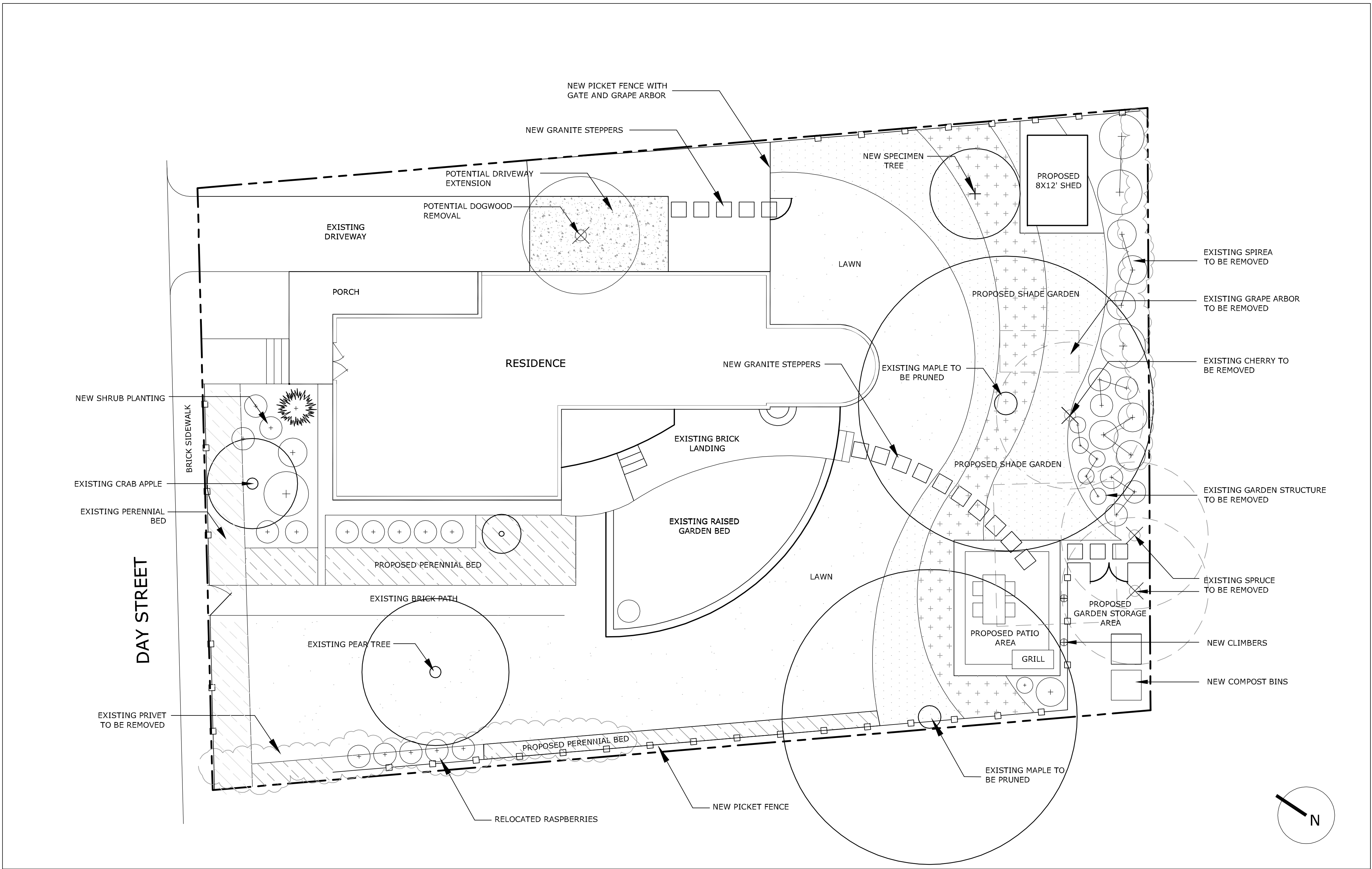
Crosina Residence - 34 Day Street, Somerville, MA

Proposed Landscape Plan - Option A

Date: 5.28.14
 Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"

C/S BAILEY landscape, Inc.

copyright 2014



Crosina Residence - 34 Day Street, Somerville, MA

Revised Landscape Plan

Date: 6.18.14

Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"

C/S BAILEY landscape, Inc.

copyright 2014